Modern Education:

Objectives & Guidance

Mawlānā Idrīs Kāndhlawī
(1899–1974 CE)

The Author

Mawlānā Muḥammad Idrīs Kāndhlawī (1899–1974 CE) was one of the major scholars of the last century. He was born into a righteous family – his father descended from Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq (رضي الله عنه) and his mother from ʻUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (رضي الله عنه). Born in Bhopal, India, where his father worked, a few years after his birth the family moved back to their ancestral town of Kandhla. He completed memorisation of the Qur'ān in Kandhla at age 9. He would constantly recite the Qur'ān in later life and had strong recollection of it, rarely making mistakes.

Shortly after memorising the Qur'ān, his father brought him to Thana Bhawan and placed him under the supervision of Mawlānā Ashraf ʻAlī Thānawī, where he began formal education under Mawlānā Thānawī himself and Mawlānā ʻAbdullāh Gangohī. He then enrolled at Mazāhir-i-ʻUlūm, Saharanpur, and studied with great dedication under several scholars, including ʻAllāmah Khalīl Aḥmad Sahāranpūrī, graduating at age 19. He then proceeded to Dār al-ʻUlūm Deoband, where he studied Ḥadīth under major scholars like ʻAllāmah Anwar Shāh Kashmīrī, Muftī ʻAzīz al-Raḥmān Deobandī and ʻAllāmah Shabbīr Aḥmad ʻUthmānī.

He began his teaching career at Madrasah Amīniyyah in Delhi in 1921. Shortly thereafter, in 1922, he joined the teaching faculty at Dār al-ʻUlūm Deoband, where he taught advanced texts on fiqh and Arabic literature. In 1929, he took up a teaching post in Hyderabad Deccan. There, with the help of rare books and manuscripts from the Asafia Library, he authored his celebrated Arabic commentary on *Mishkāt al-Maṣābīḥ*, titled *al-Taʻlīq al-Ṣabīḥ*. In 1939, he rejoined Dār al-ʻUlūm Deoband to teach tafsīr.

He migrated to Pakistan in 1949, where he taught at Jāmiʻah ʻAbbāsiyyah Bahawalpur but resigned shortly after due to its modern outlook. He then travelled to Lahore, taking up the post of Shaykh al-Ḥadīth at the renowned Madrasah Ashrafiyyah. He remained in this post for over two decades, until his demise.

A prolific author, his well-known works include *al-Taʻlīq al-Ṣabīḥ*; *Sīrat al-Muṣṭafā*, a comprehensive and widely read sīrah work in Urdu; *Maʻārif al-Qur'ān*, a detailed Urdu tafsīr; and *ʻAqā'id al-Islām*. Several of his books are in Arabic. He also wrote refutations of atheism, communism, Qādiyānism, Christianity and other ideologies. He performed Ḥajj four times: in 1932, 1934, 1957 and 1965. During his second Ḥajj, he also visited Shām. Scholars in Syria and Makkah were deeply impressed by him. He had six sons and two daughters.

He was known for his humility, simplicity, love for scholarship & books, piety and steadfastness in following the Sunnah.

ʻAllāmah Shabbīr Aḥmad ʻUthmānī referred to him as "a walking library". Muftī Muḥammad Shafīʻ, in a letter of condolence following his demise, said: "Despite being contemporaries and of approximately the same age, Mawlānā, Allāh have mercy on him, surpassed us in all accomplishments of knowledge, action and character. He also

outstripped us in crossing the field of life." (*Tazkirah-i-Mawlānā Muḥammad Idrīs Kāndhlawī*, p.23) One student said that Mawlānā Idrīs Kāndhlawī had the special quality of "treating students, even the poorest of them, as kings, while disliking rulers." (ibid., p.45)

Shaykh Maḥmūd Rashīd al-'Aṭṭār of Syria said of him: "Righteous, capable, combining (mastery in) numerous fields of knowledge and literature, pleasant, fine in features, often silent, lofty in ambition, amongst the distinguished of the ummah, a ḥāfiẓ of the Book of Allāh, devoted to his Lord, a devout worshipper, humble and modest…Seeing him reminded us of the pious predecessors amongst the imāms…It is our good fortune that he arrived in our land, Damascus…I met with him in several gatherings and found him to be a highly-skilled scholar, fond of solitude and seclusion from creation." (*al-Ta'līq al-Ṣabīḥ*, 3:404)

Aḥsan al-Tafhīm li Mas'alat al-Ta'līm

(The Finest Elucidation on the Issue of Education)[1]

[1] First published in 1972. (*Tazkirah-i-Mawlānā Muḥammad Idrīs Kāndhlawī*, p.183)

Introduction

In Allāh's name, the Most Merciful, the Ever Gracious.

All praise belongs to Allāh, Who has granted us excellence over many of His believing slaves and made us from amongst the carriers of the Sharī'ah of His Prophet, the Seal of the Prophets and Messengers – blessings and peace of Allāh be upon them all and upon us along with them – O Most Merciful of the Merciful.

To proceed:

The insignificant slave Muḥammad Idrīs – may Allāh be in his favour – presents before the followers of Islām this short write-up, in which a concise discussion is offered regarding religious education, English (Western) education and combined education. It is hoped that it brings insight and peace of mind to seekers of truth and that it becomes clear that the manner in which English education is imparted today yields the very knowledge from which the Prophet ﷺ sought protection with this prayer:

اللهم إني أعوذ بك من علم لا ينفع، ومن قلب لا يخشع، ومن نفس لا تشبع، ومن دعاء لا يسمع (سنن أبي داود، ج١ ح١٥٤٤؛ سنن النسائي، ج٣ ح١٨٤٠)

"O Allāh, I seek refuge with You from knowledge that does not benefit, from a heart that does not fear, from a soul that is never satisfied and from a prayer that is not heard."

This verse of the Noble Qur'ān:

فَأَعۡرِضۡ عَن مَّن تَوَلَّىٰ عَن ذِكۡرِنَا وَلَمۡ يُرِدۡ إِلَّا ٱلۡحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنۡيَا ذَٰلِكَ مَبۡلَغُهُم مِّنَ ٱلۡعِلۡمِۚ

"So, turn away from the one who turns away from Our reminder and desires nothing but the life of the dunyā – that is the extent of their knowledge." (Qur'ān, 53:29–30)

Commands us to turn away from the knowledge whose only aim is dunyā, with no concern for the ākhirah.

Suppose there was a college where such education is imparted that results in the laws and rules of the government of the time being devalued, and the teachers and students lose any sense of obedience and loyalty to the government. The institution becomes an arena and target range for criticism and critique of governmental orders. Certainly, in such a case, the government would declare such a college opposed to its legal system.

In the same way, the Islāmic Sharī'ah deems forbidden the education that undermines worship, obedience and loyalty to the Most Supreme Judge. The degree to which this is undermined will be the degree to which it is prohibited.

The ḥadīth, "Seeking knowledge is an obligation upon every Muslim," refers to the knowledge that leads to knowledge of worship and obedience of Allāh, the Most Glorious. Allāh forbid, Allāh forbid! It does not refer to English (Western) education. Rather, it refers to the knowledge that makes a human being Allāh's slave. Otherwise, he is not a *bandah* (slave) but *gandah* (filth).

Friends, pursue the knowledge that makes you Allāh's slave, and take precautions against the "knowledge" that turns a person into a slave of his own ego – who steps outside the bounds of humanity and enters the realm of bestiality: he eats while standing like animals and urinates while standing like them. Allāh protect.

إِنۡ أُرِيدُ إِلَّا ٱلۡإِصۡلَٰحَ مَا ٱسۡتَطَعۡتُۚ وَمَا تَوۡفِيقِيٓ إِلَّا بِٱللَّهِۚ عَلَيۡهِ تَوَكَّلۡتُ وَإِلَيۡهِ أُنِيبُ

"I seek only to make (things) aright as much as I am able, and enablement comes from Allāh alone – upon Him I place my trust, and to Him I turn." (Qur'ān, 11:88)

[The Purpose of Education:
Imparting Knowledge & Cultivating Disposition]

The Reality of Knowledge and Its Excellence

In Allāh's name, the Most Merciful, the Ever Gracious.

We praise Him and send blessings upon His Noble Messenger.

All sages and people of reason agree that there is no greater blessing than intellect, and no loftier virtue or excellence than knowledge. If there is intellect but no knowledge, it is like a person who is naked and exposed. And if, God forbid, there is no intellect at all, then there is no life – a dead person is better than a living person without intellect.

Whether it is the life of dunyā or the ākhirah, the secular or the sacred, all pivot on knowledge. There is no bound or limit to the fields and branches of knowledge, but the true and essential knowledge is that which comes from above – through which one learns the means of recognising the Lord of Majesty and His obedience and worship.

There are two types of knowledge:

1. Religious knowledge (*'ilm al-dīn*)
2. Worldly knowledge (*'ilm al-dunyā*)

Religious knowledge refers to the knowledge through which awareness of Allāh and His commands is gained, and the path of His obedience is learnt. Worldly knowledge refers to knowledge that serves as a means of acquiring worldly benefits.

There are many categories of worldly knowledge. Some are permissible (*mubāḥ*) or lawful in the eyes of Sharīʿah, some are discouraged (*makrūh*), and some are forbidden (*ḥarām*), the details of which are discussed at the beginning of *Radd al-Muḥtār*.

For a Muslim, as a Muslim, religious knowledge is the primary objective, while worldly knowledge is a secondary objective. This is precisely the distinction between a believer and a disbeliever: the believer views the ākhirah as his goal and regards the dunyā as subordinate to and in service of the ākhirah. On the other hand, the disbeliever's goal – indeed, his deity – is the dunyā alone. He has no vision of ākhirah in mind. As a result, the disbeliever, in pursuit of worldly progress, does not recognise any distinction between lawful and unlawful or between permitted and prohibited. To him, such distinctions are obstacles in the path of worldly gain.

The jihād the Noble Prophets waged against disbelievers was never for the dunyā, but rather for "the word of Allāh to be supreme". The Noble Ṣaḥābah, who overthrew the thrones of Caesar and Chosroes and seized their crowns and kingdoms, did not seek the dunyā or the kingdom and rulership of the dunyā. Their goal was only dīn. All such efforts and struggles were for the protection, honour and strengthening of the dīn. These great personalities had already divorced the world with three irrevocable divorces and had become passionately devoted to dīn. They toppled the empires of Caesar and Chosroes so that the dīn and its followers would be safe from the interference and treachery of the enemies of Allāh, and so that no one could obstruct the implementation and enforcement of Allāh's commandments.

A Muslim acquires power and rule only so that Allāh's religion is honoured, no one looks upon it with disdain and the road is clear for the implementation and enforcement of the divine law. By contrast, the disbeliever seeks power and rule so that the arena is open for his personal agendas and aims, his emotions and passions, his oppressive and selfish ambitions.

Therefore, it is the foremost duty of the rulers and leaders in an Islāmic government to not hesitate in honouring and protecting the dīn and religious knowledge.

I would, with utmost respect, request our leaders and rulers to consider the public treasury as a divine treasury, to regard the support and service of religious sciences as their foremost duty, and to deem religious institutions as far greater and more elevated than worldly institutions.

The Protection of Religion Is a Collective Responsibility

The knowledge of religion is a joint property of all Muslims. It is evident that when something is jointly owned, its protection becomes the responsibility and duty of all partners. If someone, God forbid, were to say, "I am not a partner or stakeholder in it," then we have no discourse with him, and we promise never to say a word to him regarding the protection of religious knowledge. But we do not expect any Muslim to ever make such a claim – and, if Allāh wills, no one will. It is clear that everyone considers religious knowledge to be joint property, and therefore, its protection is everyone's responsibility.

Is Religious Knowledge a Barrier to Progress?

Modern-educated individuals believe that religious knowledge hinders worldly progress. This notion is incorrect. The brief response to this is that the worldly progress achieved by the Noble Ṣaḥābah is such that even Europe views them with amazement and wonder. Had the Qur'ān, Sunnah or religious knowledge been an obstacle to progress, the Noble Ṣaḥābah would never have turned their attention to it, nor would they have taken any step towards overthrowing the empires of Caesar and Chosroes.

The detailed response is that worldly progress depends on four things:

1. Agriculture
2. Industry and craftsmanship
3. Trade
4. Employment or service

Today, the machinery of all governments revolves around these four areas. The Sharī'ah has not prohibited any one of them; in fact, it has declared all of them to be collective obligations upon Muslims. If the Muslims of an entire region were to abandon agriculture or industry, then all would be sinful.

The Noble Prophets (علیهم السلام) followed different routes in terms of their livelihoods. Ḥaḍrat Ādam (علیه السلام) engaged in farming. Ḥaḍrat Mūsā (علیه السلام) shepherded sheep

for wages. Ḥaḍrat Dāwūd (علیہ السلام) crafted armour, so it could be used for protection in battle.

The Noble Qur'ān states:

وَأَعِدُّواْ لَهُم مَّا ٱسۡتَطَعۡتُم مِّن قُوَّةٖ وَمِن رِّبَاطِ ٱلۡخَيۡلِ تُرۡهِبُونَ بِهِۦ عَدُوَّ ٱللَّهِ وَعَدُوَّكُمۡ وَءَاخَرِينَ مِن دُونِهِمۡ لَا تَعۡلَمُونَهُمُ ٱللَّهُ يَعۡلَمُهُمۡۚ

"And (for fighting and confronting the disbelievers) provide whatever strength and power you can. For example, raise horses (and gather weapons). (In short, gather enough strength) to frighten (and intimidate) the enemies of Allāh & your enemies and (to instil fear in) other (forces) that you do not know but Allāh knows." (Qur'ān, 8:60)

This means: O Muslims! Jihād against the disbelievers is compulsory for you, and likewise, to muster the tools of jihād is also an obligation upon you. In the time of the Prophet ﷺ, the tools of jihād were horse riding, swordsmanship and archery. Today, the tools of jihād are guns, cannons, aircraft, submarines, etc. Mustering these types of tools is included in this verse and is the very essence of divine intent (behind this command).

Crafting swords and arrows, practising archery, training horses for jihād, digging trenches to resist enemies and using catapults in battle – the encouragement and emphasis of all such matters occur frequently in ḥadīths. The meaning of all these verses and ḥadīths is this very thing: Do not hesitate in gathering the strength and material power you can muster to combat the enemies of Allāh.

A major reason for the decline that befell Islāmic governments in these two hundred years is the negligence of the command: "وَأَعِدُّواْ لَهُم مَّا ٱسۡتَطَعۡتُم". Had we established factories for weapons manufacturing, we would not have witnessed these days of disgrace.

The summary of the matter is that the Sharī'ah itself has emphasised the things upon which progress depends. Progress is not dependent on adopting English civilisation and Christian customs and appearances.

My dear ones! Understand well that the Sharī'ah indeed commands jihād and combat and has emphasised the establishment of Islāmic rule and authority. But sovereignty itself is not the goal, rather the intrinsic objective is dīn, and authority is for its protection.

ٱلَّذِينَ إِن مَّكَّنَّٰهُمۡ فِي ٱلۡأَرۡضِ أَقَامُواْ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَءَاتَوُاْ ٱلزَّكَوٰةَ وَأَمَرُواْ بِٱلۡمَعۡرُوفِ وَنَهَوۡاْ عَنِ ٱلۡمُنكَرِۗ وَلِلَّهِ عَٰقِبَةُ ٱلۡأُمُورِ

"If We grant (the Muslims) authority and power in the land (that is, if We grant them kingship and rule, then this particular group of the Ṣaḥābah will not become heedless of God after gaining power. Rather,) they will establish prayer, give Zakāt, enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil. The outcome of all affairs is in Allāh's control." (Qur'ān, 22:41)

The Definition of Islāmic Civilisation and Modern Civilisation

In Islām, *tahdhīb* (refinement) is defined as the purification of the soul from vile traits and the adornment of the soul with noble traits. In modern terminology, however, *tahdhīb* has

come to mean adopting Christian dress and appearance, urinating while standing, frequenting cinemas instead of masjids and taking unveiled women to recreational places. To such people, the one who reads newspapers and novels is “capable” and “intellectual”, while the one who reads the Qur’ān and Ḥadīth is “foolish” and “ignorant”.

My dear ones, these are indeed harsh words. But if there remains any connection to Allāh and His Messenger, and any realisation that the day will come when we face Allāh and His Messenger, then I have the right to express grievance and complaint to you. Otherwise, I have no complaint.

Similarly, *tamaddun* (civilisation) in Sharī‘ah means mutual cooperation amongst people. But in the eyes of the so-called “civilised nations”, civilisation is defined by the accumulation of tools of enjoyment and indulgence, with no regard for what is permissible or forbidden, true or false, trustworthy or treacherous. Wealth must be acquired, whether by oppression and injustice, bribery or any scheme or plot. Votes and banknotes become the goal, and how they are obtained, whether through looting or exploitation, is of no concern.

The Sharī‘ah regards all these matters as forbidden, unlawful and the worst of character and deeds. Say, with even a little fairness, can any genuine worldly progress come from such character and conduct? Absolutely not. The thinkers and planners of Europe themselves are crying out that this modern civilisation is leading us towards destruction and ruin. This is not a new *tahdhīb* (refinement), but a new kind of *ta‘dhīb* (torment).

Arabic Education

The Arabic language is a heavenly language. All the angels converse in Arabic. The final law of the Lord of the Worlds, i.e. the Noble Qur’ān, was sent down in this very language. Moreover, the last Prophet and final Messenger also came as an Arab Messenger. Every government has a specific language, in which its laws and proclamations are issued and all official correspondence is conducted, even if the language spoken by the public is different.

You have seen that during the British rule, the Viceroy was not permitted to deliver speeches in Urdu in the governorate of India instead of English. Regardless of whether the audience understood or not, the Viceroy’s address will be in English. Those who wished to comprehend the speech had to learn English or seek assistance from someone who knew it.

For this very reason, the Jumu‘ah and ‘Īd khuṭbahs have been made obligatory to be delivered in Arabic – because Arabic is the official language. Whether the audience understands it or not, the khuṭbah must remain in Arabic. The Noble Ṣaḥābah conquered thousands of non-Arab lands whose populations were entirely unfamiliar with Islām, yet the khuṭbah was always delivered in Arabic. On this basis, the four imāms – Imām Abū Ḥanīfah, Imām Mālik, Imām al-Shāfi‘ī and Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (رحمهم الله) – unanimously declared that delivering the khuṭbah in a non-Arabic language is reprehensible. For thirteen centuries, Muslims throughout the East and West, North and

South, have upheld this carried practice and tradition of delivering the khuṭbah in Arabic. However, in recent years, the innovation of delivering the khuṭbah in Urdu has begun to spread. May Allāh, Exalted is He, protect us from this bid‘ah.

It is narrated from Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

أحبوا العرب لثلاث: لأني عربي والقرآن عربي وكلام أهل الجنة عربي (أخرجه الطبراني والحاكم والبيهقي فى الشعب، كذا فى الكنز، ج٦ ص٢٠٤)

“Love the Arabs for three reasons: because I am an Arab, the Qur’ān is in Arabic, and the language of the people of Paradise is Arabic.”

It is also established in (some) narrations that Ādam (عليه السلام) was descended from Paradise to India, and for a long time, he spoke Arabic. After a period of time, his descendants began speaking different languages, which indicates that the original language of India was Arabic.

Moreover, in today’s time, it has become as clear as daylight that in the promotion and dissemination of civilisation, morals and conduct, nothing is more effective than language. When the English came to India, they established colleges and schools in the English language to spread their own civilisation and culture – and the degree to which they succeeded in this aim is more evident than the sun. English civilisation and culture became so dominant that even the simple dwellers of the masjid were mocked as “the sheep of the masjid,” without realising that the sheep of the masjid are superior to the dogs of the world. Nor did they realise that if the owners of cars and bungalows are bearers of the knowledge of Fir‘awn and Hāmān, then the lungi-wearing masjid dwellers are the heirs of the knowledge of the Enwrapped Prophet ﷺ.

Indeed, this group has its flaws, but remember – they are attendants and servants at the court of the master of both worlds ﷺ. If anyone disrespects a maulvi or mullah merely for being one, a case will be brought against him from Allāh: why belittle God’s caller and the drum-beaters for the dīn of Islām? Belittling a scholar of dīn because they are a scholar of dīn is, in fact, an act of disrespecting the knowledge of dīn itself.

Furthermore, the Indian government has declared Hindi as the official language so that after a few days – God forbid – Islāmic culture will be erased from India, and all minority communities will be seen coloured by the civilisational and cultural hue of Hinduism. O Allāh, protect us from this.

Understand the Arabic language in a similar way. When you learn and study Arabic, the divine ethics, the illuminations and blessings of the angels, as well as the virtues and perfections of the Unlettered Prophet ﷺ – my soul be his ransom – and his companions and followers will be reflected upon your hearts. The least wondrous effect of this will be that the keys to the treasures of the Caesars and Chosroes of today will be in your hands, while the honour and elevation of the ākhirah will be beyond all imagination and conception.

O my dear ones, do not think that it is impossible to overturn the thrones of today's Caesar and Chosroes. This thought is incorrect. Follow the same path, and the same result can follow.

The cloud of mercy is now trembling,
The wine pitcher and tavern are both equally present

Imām Mālik (رحمه الله) said:

لن يفلح آخر هذه الأمة إلا بما أفلح أولها

"The later parts of the ummah will not succeed except through what the first of them succeeded with."

Follow the path of the Ṣaḥābah, and *inshā' Allāh*, you will attain success akin to theirs.

In summary, Arabic is the official language of the Most Supreme Judge. It is the language used in the heavenly records, and all divine matters are recorded in Arabic. Therefore, the consensus of the scholars and the mujtahid imāms is that learning Arabic is a communal obligation (*farḍ kifāyah*). Furthermore, the questioning in the grave will be in Arabic. Munkar and Nakīr will come and ask: مَنْ رَبُّكَ وَمَا دِيْنُكَ. Even the dead from England, upon entering the Barzakh realm, will begin to understand Arabic and will answer in Arabic.

The Education Curriculum

Before we contemplate the curriculum, we need to reflect and ponder on the purpose and objective of the mission of the master of the universe, the Noblest Prophet ﷺ, so that we design an education curriculum keeping this purpose in mind. Allāh, Exalted is His Might, states:

هُوَ ٱلَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي ٱلۡأُمِّيِّـۧنَ رَسُولٗا مِّنۡهُمۡ يَتۡلُواْ عَلَيۡهِمۡ ءَايَٰتِهِۦ وَيُزَكِّيهِمۡ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ ٱلۡكِتَٰبَ وَٱلۡحِكۡمَةَ وَإِن كَانُواْ مِن قَبۡلُ لَفِي ضَلَٰلٖ مُّبِينٖ

“It is He who has sent amongst the unlettered ones a messenger from themselves, reciting (and conveying) to them His verses, purifying them and teaching them the Book and Wisdom. Indeed, before, they were in clear error.” (Qur’ān, 62:2)

These verses clearly show that the objectives of the Prophetic mission were:

1. Recitation of the Qur’ān, which includes both memorising the Qur’ān and correct pronunciation (tajwīd).
2. Teaching the Book and Wisdom, which refers to the teaching of the Qur’ān and Ḥadīth. Teaching means elucidating and instructing – making the meaning and sense understood. The fields of Tafsīr and Ḥadīth are included in this.
3. Spreading the dīn. This includes the branch of preaching, as well as both oral and written admonition and instructive debate and dialogue with the upholders of falsehood.

In *Izālat al-Khafā’*, Ḥaḍrat Shāh Waliyyullāh writes: “The matters the Prophet ﷺ gave accomplishment to in his capacity as Prophet and Messenger are: establishing the dīn, promoting the faith, executing jihād against the dīn’s enemies, implementing the ḥudūd of Sharī‘ah, establishing the pillars of Islām, reviving dīnī sciences like qaḍā’, iftā’ and so on and so forth.”

This is a brief summary of the objectives and purposes for the completion of which Allāh, Majestic and Mighty is He, sent the Noble Prophet ﷺ. It is not hidden from those who have understanding that fulfilling some of these objectives pertains to the rulers and leaders, while others pertain to the scholars and righteous people. For example, empowering the dīn in the land, elevating the word of Allāh, jihād and fighting against the enemies of the dīn, protecting Muslim lands from the thieving hands of the disbelievers, implementing the ḥudūd of Sharī‘ah and enforcing divine commands are duties and responsibilities of the rulers and leaders.

The revival of dīnī sciences, teaching the Book and the Sunnah, iftā’ and qaḍā’, admonishing and instructing and the dīnī upbringing of Muslims are the duties of the ‘ulamā’. Each group will be questioned on the Day of Judgement regarding how well they fulfilled their respective duties.

The group of ‘ulamā’, being the group in need, while teaching the Qur’ān and Ḥadīth and reviving dīnī sciences, is engaged in a royal task. However, these tasks, which are the works of the Most Supreme Judge and the Lord of the Worlds, cannot be carried out without financial support. Therefore, the rulers and leaders, who are the treasurers and

custodians of divine wealth, should not hesitate or delay in offering their best service and support for these royal tasks. They should be mindful, God forbid, that the ‘ulamā’ and the needy ones may complain in the court of the Most Supreme Judge: “O our Lord, we were in need of financial support to teach Your dīn, but the rulers and leaders did not even provide us with one-fortieth of the amount they give for worldly education. And when they did give, they made it a condition that dīnī education be mixed with secular education for the support to be approved.”

O Allāh, all praise is due to You, and to You is the complaint. You alone are the One from whom help is sought.

The summary of the matter is that the education curriculum should be designed in such a way that it allows for the fulfilment of the objectives and purposes of the Prophetic mission, i.e. enabling the correct teaching of the Book and Sunnah, the performance of the duties of iftā’ and qaḍā’, enabling Muslims to preach and instruct, and giving them the capability to preach to believers in false ideologies and engage in debates with them – duties which were the primary obligations of the Noble Prophets (علیهم السلام). The debates of Ḥaḍrat Ibrāhīm Khalīlullāh and Ḥaḍrat Mūsā Kalīmullāh with Nimrod and Fir‘awn are mentioned in the Noble Qur’ān.

Dispelling a Doubt

My intention is not to say that English education should not be imparted or that it is impermissible. If English is taught for the needs of an Islāmic state, it is not only permissible but may also be obligatory, as long as the objective is solely the language itself, free from any Christian hue. My only point is that Arabic education should not be mixed or conditioned with English education. Arabic should be taught separately, and English separately. When Arabic and English education are mixed, the hue of dīn is lost. The path of “الذین أنعمت علیهم” is completely different and antithetical to the path of “المغضوب علیهم” and “الضالین”. Those who advocate a theory of integration don’t realise that the integration of opposites is impossible in reason.

Duration of Education

The duration of education should not be so long that it causes anxiety for the students and becomes an arduous and heavy financial burden on the parents. Nor should it be so short that it becomes merely nominal, with students receiving certificates or degrees without actual capability. A moderate and balanced duration is eight years, with two additional years for completing the advanced levels. When Ḥaḍrat Mūsā (علیه السلام) went to Ḥaḍrat Shu‘ayb (علیه السلام) in Madyan, he suggested staying there for eight years, and also said: “It would be better to complete ten years.” (Qur’ān, 28:27)

In the curriculum for religious education, the following matters are necessary:

1. Books authored by individuals accepted for their knowledge and piety are included, so that their blessings aid and support the learning process.

2. Books included are concise and comprehensive, fostering solid ability.

3. Books that are too simplistic and easy, where students can solve problems through self-study, are excluded from the curriculum. Such books do not foster ability, nor do students commit to attending these lessons, feeling that they don't need the teacher. On one side, this disappoints the teacher, and on the other, it wastes madrasah time.

4. If modern philosophy, science, geography and history are included in the curriculum, the condition is that their teaching be subordinate to dīnī education. Furthermore, the language used should not be the language of "المغضوب عليهم" and "الضالين", i.e. Jews and Christians. The teacher of this modern philosophy should have an Islāmic, not English, hue.

صِبۡغَةَ ٱللَّهِ وَمَنۡ أَحۡسَنُ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ صِبۡغَةٗۖ

"The hue of Allāh, and who better than Allāh in hue?"

The Qur'ān and Ḥadīth are full of prohibitions against resembling the disbelievers.

Types of Schools

After the year 1857 in India, three types of schools were established:

First Type

The first type of school is one whose goal is solely the preservation and protection of dīnī knowledge. The very first institution in this regard is Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband, founded by Ḥaḍrat Mawlānā Qāsim Nānautawī (Allāh illuminate his resting place). This fount of knowledge is still flowing, and thousands of scholars and pious individuals have been produced from it. The second madrasah is Madrasah Maẓāhir-i-'Ulūm in Saharanpur, founded by Ḥaḍrat Mawlānā Muḥammad Maẓhar Nānautawī (Allāh sanctify his soul). After the partition of India, the dīnī madrasah established in Lahore by Ḥaḍrat Mawlānā Muftī Muḥammad Ḥasan Ṣāḥib Amritsarī (رحمه الله), a major khalīfah of Ḥaḍrat Ḥakīm al-Ummat Mawlānā Ashraf 'Alī Ṣāḥib Thānawī (his soul be sanctified), called Jāmi'ah Ashrafiyyah, is also of this type.

Second Type

The second type of school is one whose goal is solely worldly progress and to involve itself in the existing government system, achieving various positions in the government based on qualifications. The first school in this category is Aligarh College, founded by Sir Syed. He was quite successful in his purpose. Thousands of Muslims received English education and became highly qualified in it, securing prominent positions in the government. Schools of this kind are a realisation of:

وَلَمۡ يُرِدۡ إِلَّا ٱلۡحَيَوٰةَ ٱلدُّنۡيَا ذَٰلِكَ مَبۡلَغُهُم مِّنَ ٱلۡعِلۡمِۚ

"Intending not but the life of the dunyā, that is their limit of knowledge." (Qur'ān, 53:29–30)

They receive in the dunyā only as much fruits as Allāh had willed for them, in accordance with the divine word:

مَّن كَانَ يُرِيدُ ٱلۡعَاجِلَةَ عَجَّلۡنَا لَهُۥ فِيهَا مَا نَشَآءُ لِمَن نُّرِيدُ

"Whoever desires this hasty (world) – We hasten to (give) him in it whatever We please to whomever We wish." (Qur'ān, 17:18)

Difference Between Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband and Aligarh College

One difference that has already become clear is that the goal of Aligarh College was solely the dunyā, whereas Dār al-'Ulūm's focus was only the ākhirah. Another difference is that the scope of education at Aligarh College was limited to India, while the benefit of Dār al-'Ulūm's education was not confined to India alone. Students from China, Bukhara, Samarkand, Russia and Turkestan also came to Dār al-'Ulūm to acquire knowledge. Even from Makkah Mukarramah and Madīnah Munawwarah – the very places where the fountain of knowledge first emerged – students came to Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband to learn the knowledge of the Book and Sunnah, Qur'ān and Ḥadīth. All praise and credit are due to Allāh, and that is Allāh's grace which He gives to whomever He wills.

However, no students from Europe came to Aligarh College to learn English. It is thus realised that Dār al-'Ulūm is a storehouse and treasure trove of knowledge, such that those who reside in the Sacred Valley (of Makkah) and the Blessed Plot (of Madīnah) – the very source and spring of prophetic knowledge – travel to Deoband to acquire the jewels of knowledge from the storehouse of Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband.

This karāmah *is not from physical power;*
Until the granting is God's granting.

In short, a spring of dīnī knowledge sprang forth from Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband, from which knowledge spread to every corner of India.

In the year 1857, when the light of the Islāmic government was extinguished, the righteous 'ulamā' had the concern: "Due to our evil deeds, indulgence in worldly pleasures and negligence, the Islāmic government had ended, and we had fallen prey to the Christian claw. But God forbid, it shouldn't be that alongside the ending of the Islāmic government, the Islām of the Muslims too ends. God forbid, God forbid, that the children of Islām, due to their ignorance and alienation from the knowledge of dīn, would become prey to Christianity (Westernisation), especially when the hunters of Christianity were laying traps of wealth and women, lying in wait for the prey."

The righteous scholars of that time, sensing this necessity, responded by laying the foundation of Islāmic and Arabic madrasahs and emerging on the front lines to combat Christianity. They engaged in debates with Christian missionaries, both verbally and in writing, and authored such well-supported and comprehensive books to refute the foundations and peripherals of the Christian religion that are unmatched on the surface of the globe.

May Allāh illuminate their resting places. As long as they lived, they, with their speeches and debates in combating Christians, preserved and protected the Islām and faith of the Muslims. And when they departed the dunyā, they ensured that before they left they made the future 'ulamā' the inheritors of their books and writings so they could protect and preserve Islām and combat the Christians with these weapons.

A Muslim can endure the decline of a governate or kingdom but cannot remain patient in the face of the loss of the treasure of faith and Islām. The living can be patient, but the concept of patience does not apply to the dead. Similarly, God forbid, if faith and Islām are lost, they are dead. This is why, in the Noble Qur'ān, the believer and disbeliever are phrased as seeing and blind, living and dead, and faith and disbelief as light and darkness. If, according to wise men, an ignorant person can be called dead or an animal, why cannot a denier of the Most Supreme Judge and the Lord of the Worlds be called dead or an animal? Why is it that calling an ignorant person dead or an animal is not uncultured, but calling the denier of Allāh and His Messenger dead or an animal is uncultured?!

The summary is that the goal of Islāmic and Arabic madrasahs was solely to ensure the preservation of Islām and the Islāmic sciences in India. God forbid that due to the

transformation of the government Muslims be swept away in the flood of Christianity. These madrasahs were established to protect Islām and Islāmic civilisation. Since religious knowledge is the heritage of the Noble Prophets (عليهم السلام), and the noble ‘ulamā’ are the inheritors of the Prophets of Allāh, they have always kept in mind – in their teaching and instruction – that the Unlettered Prophet – my soul be his ransom, as well as my parents – whose knowledge is being imparted, the civilisation and way of life of its teachers and students is reminiscent of that Enwrapped Prophet.

How could it be possible to claim love and connection to Mūsā ibn ‘Imrān (عليه السلام), yet the culture and way of life is that of Fir‘awn and Hāmān? “يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُزَّمِّلُ” and “يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُدَّثِّرُ” were revealed regarding the Enwrapped Prophet ﷺ. Just as the address “يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ” and “يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ” signifies the greatness of the station of prophethood and messengership, likewise, the address “يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُزَّمِّلُ” highlights the virtue of the mantle and sheet. For this reason, among the terminologies of the awliyā’, Sūrat al-Muzzammil is referred to as *Sūrat al-Khirqah* (The Sūrah of the Cloak), which describes the states and conditions required for donning the (spiritual) mantle.

Third Type

The third type of madrasah is that in which religious and worldly, Arabic and English education are combined. Colleges that grant degrees such as Molvī Fāḍil and Molvī ‘Ālim fall under this category. The aim of the founders of this type of madrasah was that religious education be combined with worldly education. For example, Nadwat al-‘Ulamā’ in Lucknow was established for this very purpose. In the curriculum, more Arabic and dīnī books were included and fewer books from the English sciences, so that dīn would remain dominant and the dunyā would remain subordinate to it. However, the outcome of this type of madrasah turned out to be that: neither was dīn attained, nor was dunyā gained. The hard-earned wealth and sweat of Muslims that was spent in assisting and supporting these madrasahs, all of it went to waste and proved futile.

From such seminaries, neither did any sound and reliable ‘ālim of dīn emerge, nor did any expert in the English sciences come forth. The graduates’ competence in English will be assessed by those proficient in English, but as for their competence in Arabic and religious sciences, then those who obtained the Molvī Fāḍil certificates from these institutions have proven, by the testimony of those who examined them, that the *fāḍil* degree is indeed derived from “*fuḍūl*” (superfluity or waste). They are called *allāmahs* of the ummah, but instead of *‘ilm* (knowledge), it is derived from *alam* (pain). The condition of the majority is such that they are unable to read Arabic texts properly, sometimes not even their own certificate. Now speak with fairness: how can such individuals be entrusted with teaching the dīn to the children of Muslims?

One such example is Jāmi‘ah Milliyyah, which was established in Delhi at the suggestion of Dr. Zakir Ḥusain. Its condition is before everyone: neither is it dīn, nor is it dunyā. Today, its founder is the Vice President of India and the author of the Wardha Scheme. It has not brought any benefit to religion in any way.

The upshot is that all the seminaries established in the last half-century under the theory of integration have, through experience, proven ineffective. From these institutions, neither did any ʻālim of dīn emerge, nor any proficient expert in English.

The Harms of Mixed Arabic and English Education

The privileges and concessions found in Arabic madrasahs are not found in English schools, for example, stipends, free accommodation and meals without charge, and books of the madrasah loaned to students for study without cost. Thus, those who cannot bear the expenses of English education use Arabic as an excuse to enter madrasahs and benefit from these facilities and concessions, but in reality, they prepare for English education and pay no attention whatsoever to Arabic books. Attendance in lessons is merely formal, and there is neither *muṭālaʻah* nor *takrār*, not even as a formality. English civilisation takes hold of them, and Islāmic civilisation becomes lowly in their sight. They prefer disconnection from the righteous and pious, and instead prefer the company of the worldly and rulers. Shaving or trimming the beard and adopting English-style haircuts become minor matters in their view. Furthermore, their company causes other enthusiastic students to lose their enthusiasm. The ustādh holds no status in their eyes – they view the teacher as a servant or employee. The result is that they are deprived of the compassionate gaze of the ustādh. So then, from where will *ʻilm* come?

إن العلم والطبيب كلاهما
لا ينصحان إذ هما لم يكرما

Indeed, both knowledge and doctor do not benefit when they are not respected.

Moreover, admission is taken for one level, while preparation is made for the examination of another. The title is of one rank, but the actual effort is directed toward something else entirely. Then, through intermediaries and commendations, they obtain a certificate of success. When they leave the madrasah holding a *sanad* of graduation, they have no proficiency in Arabic, because throughout their years of study, their entire attention remained fixed on English, and Arabic received only nominal focus. As a result, they are steeped entirely in the hue of English from head to toe. Instead of *mudarris* and *waʻiẓ*, they find the terms “professor” and “lecture” appealing and desirable.

One of the harms caused by the Molvī Fāḍil classes is that students begin pressing teachers to complete the texts quickly so that they can be free from studies three or four months prior to the exams. On the one hand, this results in a decline in educational quality, as proper depth in teaching is sacrificed, and on the other hand, it leads to the seminary remaining idle and without lessons for three or four months. The students disengage from their studies, and the free time they gain is spent in play and entertainment, leaving them empty of both knowledge and prayer.

In short, this type of mixed education leads, on the one hand, to the wasted efforts of Arabic teachers, and on the other hand, the time designated for Arabic and religious instruction is misused entirely. The hopes Muslims had – that these young men, after studying religious subjects, would serve as guides – all proved futile. Since they lack

proficiency in Arabic and religious sciences, they regard serving in government offices, rather than in Islāmic seminaries, as a matter of honour and status. God forbid, had the traditional institutions not remained, no one would be left to explain the true meanings of Qur'ān and Ḥadīth or to issue correct fatwās on matters of ḥalāl and ḥarām. It is the duty of all Muslims to preserve religious knowledge in its original form and colour, and to safeguard it from the stains and traces of disbelief and polytheism.

The summary of the discussion is that the merging of two different types of education in one place has rendered both ineffective and unproductive. When someone wishes to master English, they travel to London or Paris so that no environment other than that of English (i.e. Western culture) remains. In the same way, if the 'ulamā' desire that Arabic education not be mixed with non-Arabic education, then what is so out of place in that?

English (Western) Education

In the Qur’ān and ḥadīths, the virtues that have come for knowledge, those who are fond of English education apply them to English itself, and they present one ḥadīth in particular in this regard:

اطلبوا العلم ولو بالصين

“Seek knowledge, even if it is in China.”

It seems that, in their view, when the Qur’ān and Ḥadīth encourage the pursuit of knowledge, it does not refer to the knowledge of Allāh and His Messenger but rather to the knowledge of the enemies of Allāh and His Messenger. It doesn’t refer to the knowledge of the two Ḥarams and the Holy Land, but rather the knowledge of London and Paris. According to them, all these verses and ḥadīths mean that one should not read the Qur’ān or Ḥadīth but should instead focus on English knowledge, modern fields and sciences. Allāh forbid, in their view, reading the Qur’ān turns a person into an ignorant and uncivilised being, while studying English and modern sciences makes one scholarly and civilised. We belong to Allāh and to Him is our return. This is the extreme of the obsession with English (the West), and is the realisation of:

All things become manifest from afar, this I advise you.

Meaning, it is not necessary to delve inside.

In the terminology of the Qur’ān and Ḥadīth, *‘ilm* refers to the knowledge of revelation, which is the knowledge that leads to closeness to Allāh and the path to reach His court. Shaykh Sa‘dī said:

"Knowledge that does not show the path of truth is ignorance."

Now, I ask you: Does English knowledge bring closeness to God or distance from Him? Does it bring union or separation? You decide.

Difference Between Philosophy and the Teachings of the Prophets

Philosophy also encourages pondering and reflection on the heavens, the earth, stars and celestial bodies, and the Qur’ān and Ḥadīth also command reflection and contemplation of the heavens and the earth, as is evident from numerous verses of the Noble Qur’ān. However, there is an earth-sky difference between the two. The Sharī‘ah commands reflection on the heavens and the earth so that, by observing the creation, one recognises the Creator and the Maker. The aim is not knowledge of the heavens and the earth themselves, but the knowledge of their Creator, as Allāh, Most Exalted, has stated:

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَٱخْتِلَٰفِ ٱلَّيْلِ وَٱلنَّهَارِ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّأُو۟لِى ٱلْأَلْبَٰبِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ ٱللَّهَ قِيَٰمًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَٰذَا بَٰطِلًا سُبْحَٰنَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ ٱلنَّارِ

“Indeed, the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of the night and the day, are signs for those of understanding: those who remember Allāh, standing, sitting and lying on their sides, and reflect upon the creation of the heavens and the earth,

saying: ‘Our Lord, You did not create this in vain. Pure are You from all imperfections, so protect us from the punishment of the Fire.’” (Qur’ān, 3:190–1)

In this verse, those are called *ulu al-albāb* who reflect upon the heavens and the earth, and through this reflection recognise their Creator. They realise that the One who created the heavens, the earth, the night and the day deserves submission to His greatness and majesty, and so they engage in His worship, remembrance and contemplation.

Therefore, a person who reflects on the heavens and the earth in order to recognise their Creator is wise and possesses understanding. However, one whose aim is merely to acquire knowledge of the heavens and the earth is not wise nor does he possess understanding in the sight of God. The objective of philosophy and science is only to understand the heavens, the earth, the stars and celestial bodies with no concern or connection with knowledge of the Creator.

If a guest enters a royal palace and tours its surroundings, he views everything in the palace as a reflection of the king’s glory and majesty and as being connected to the king. His focus is on the king, and he looks at these things only because they manifest the king’s grandeur, majesty and greatness. A thief also enters the same royal palace and examines it with even more attention and contemplation than the guest, but he has no connection to the king – just those objects themselves are his goal and purpose.

This is the difference between (the teachings of) a prophet and a philosopher. Understand this well.

The Shar‘ī Ruling of English Education

The Shar‘ī ruling on English education is that English, in and of itself, is a language, and in terms of common usage it refers to a specific curriculum that includes various sciences and disciplines. The Sharī‘ah has not prohibited the learning of any particular language or science in and of itself, but it has prohibited them when they are connected to evils and harms.

It has been proven by observation and experience that the current English education produces an inseparable effect whereby correct Shar‘ī conduct no longer remains, beliefs become unstable, and love and admiration for the West become so deeply ingrained that Islām and the Khilāfah Rāshidah appear insignificant in comparison. Eventually, no sympathy remains for Islām or Muslims, and Islāmic civilisation is regarded with disdain and contempt. Islāmic rulings hold no weight in their hearts. Instead of masjids, cinemas are preferred; and instead of reciting the Noble Qur’ān, novels become desirable to them – until, over time, their disposition shifts from an Islāmic one to a Western one.

It is clear that all these matters are detested by and accursed to Allāh and His Messenger, and constitute a complete package for the destruction and ruin of dīn. Due to these evils and harmful effects, the ‘ulamā’ have issued fatwās declaring English education impermissible.

However, if English education is free from these harmful effects, it would not be impermissible. In fact, if someone seeks to learn English out of a worldly necessity, and that necessity is itself permissible in Islām, then learning English would likewise be permissible. Otherwise, it is impermissible. **If someone learns English for a religious need, such as to respond to objections from opponents, to invite others to Islām or to correspond with disbelievers in matters relating to Islāmic governance, then this is not only permissible, but is in fact the essence of reward and worship. However, if it is learnt solely for worldly advancement, then the ruling on it is different.**

The summary of the discussion is that English education, in and of itself, is not impermissible. It has been deemed prohibited due to the evils and harms that accompany it. However, if, through specific methods, these harms are blocked, and the harmful effects are mitigated for the majority, the prohibition could then be lifted. Yet, there is no expectation that these harmful effects will be removed through the apparent means, so the prohibition remains. The condition of repelling harm to the majority has been given because the ruling attached to something is based on the dominant and majority cases, not on isolated instances. Cyanide, for instance, might not harm certain individuals, but since it harms most people, doctors declare it deadly. Rare cases are considered as nonexistent and not worth considering. This is why the sayings " للأكثر حكم الكل" (the majority rule applies to the whole) and "النادر كالمعدوم" (the anomalous is like the nonexistent) are widely recognised.

We have briefly pointed out the evils and harms of English education, which, it is hoped, suffices for those with understanding and wisdom. I will mention two specific points. English education has a particular effect: the habit of reading novels and watching cinema comes to not be seen as bad but as part of culture and civilisation. However, the immorality, disorderliness, misdeeds and mischievous methods learned from novels and cinema cannot be found elsewhere. Novels teach immoral acts through written words, and cinema portrays these immoral actions in practice. It is surprising that while reading novels is prohibited in courtrooms and government offices because it interferes with official work, there are no such restrictions in educational institutions.

In the Sharī'ah of Islām, creating images of living beings is unconditionally sinful, and creating images of women is even more severely ḥarām, as such depictions are often intended for entertainment and pleasure. In the eyes of the Sharī'ah, deriving pleasure from viewing the images of women is also ḥarām. Just as it is prohibited to speak about the beauty and charms of women, it is equally ḥarām to depict them with the pen. In fact, it would not be surprising if the prohibition of pictorial depiction exceeds that of verbal expression. The Sharī'ah has even prohibited looking at the clothing of a strange woman if it provokes desire.

It is deeply regrettable that such shamelessness is today regarded as culture and civilisation. The fuqahā' have stated that if someone describes the beauty and charm of a Muslim woman to a disbeliever, there is fear of apostasy. So, imaged journals and illustrated newspapers, especially those containing pictures of Muslim women, can any

sane and sincere person doubt that they are repugnant, harmful, fitnah and a means of corrupting character?

A Glimpse at the Theory of Integration

Some people, considering the needs of the time, believe that combining English education with Arabic education will lead to effective results through the blending of the old and the new. A few years ago, Jāmi'ah Islāmiyyah in Bahawalpur was established on the foundation of this theory of integration, with Jāmi'ah al-Azhar in Egypt cited as its model. At this moment, this worthless writer wishes to submit a few words regarding this theory of integration.

I say this with the help of Allāh's guidance, in Whose control is the reins of realising truth. He guides to the right path.

The sole purpose behind the establishment of dīnī madrasahs is the ākhirah – to revive the religious sciences and impart the knowledge, beliefs and way of life of the Ṣaḥābah, Tābi'ūn, mujtahid imāms and righteous salaf, so that the knowledge of dīn may be preserved. The means of protecting knowledge is through its teaching – knowledge that is not taught vanishes. Thus, the objective of dīnī madrasahs is the preservation of dīn. As for worldly sciences, there is no shortage of institutions for them in the country; anyone who wishes to acquire worldly knowledge may enrol in any school or college.

1. Falling into the notion of pursuing both religious and worldly sciences simultaneously is the embodiment of: "Seeking everything is losing everything" – neither dīn nor dunyā will be attained.

2. Moreover, combining both educations lengthens the duration of study. The period required will increase, if not double, then close to it. This becomes a burden upon both students and their parents. Hence, the 'ulamā' have considered that whoever is concerned with the ākhirah should, in a short period, acquire the essential knowledge related to the ākhirah. For a Muslim, the true goal is the ākhirah. We are not discussing the disbeliever. Thereafter, if worldly knowledge is needed, it may be pursued. For a Muslim, knowledge of the eternal abode takes precedence over that of the fleeting world, for both the wealthy and the impoverished are ultimately headed there.

3. Moreover, worldly sciences are vast, and each discipline has its own dedicated institution. There are separate colleges for engineering, medicine, naval, military and aeronautical training. Nowhere in the world is there a single institution that teaches all sciences simultaneously.

4. Furthermore, these thinkers of integration are concerned with making English education mandatory alongside dīnī sciences, but they are not concerned with making dīnī knowledge and practice compulsory in colleges and universities – the meaning of which emerges that, according to these thinkers of integration,

knowledge of the pure dīn is not essential for Muslims, but learning the knowledge and language of Christians has become so obligatory that even pure dīnī education, without the integration of English, is viewed as ineffective and unbeneficial. This theory of integration is the final stage of infatuation with English knowledge, which the 'ulamā' of dīn observe with astonishment and grief: *Allāhu Akbar*, a faction of Muslims is concerned with eliminating pure religious education from the country. Understand well that this theory of integration is the result of being overawed by Westernism.

5. There are two purposes for the establishment of dīnī madrasahs. One is the revival and preservation of dīnī sciences, and the second is the preservation and protection of صبغة الله, i.e. the dīnī and Islāmic colour. For this reason, the noble 'ulamā' have kept dīnī madrasahs protected from English education so that no trace of Christianity (Westernism) would enter the madrasahs because of English education, and the colour of dīnī madrasahs remains like that of الذين أنعمت عليهم, and the teachers and students of dīnī madrasahs are protected from the colour and odour, appearance and style, of the مغضوب عليهم and الضالين.

   Pure religious knowledge is, like rainwater, undoubtedly a purifying and sweet water, but if the impurity of Christianity falls into it, and it alters the colour, taste and smell of the spring of Sharī'ah's purifying water, then in that case, this purifying water becomes impure. As stated in the ḥadīth: إن الماء طهور لا ينجسه شيء إلا ما غير لونه أو طعمه أو ريحه.

6. The philosophy behind Western education and sciences is that the name remains Islāmic, but practical life and society are entirely Christian and Western. In this way, they seek a harmonisation between Islām and Westernism, because in Western civilisation and culture there is full freedom for carnal and sensual desires, whereas in Islām there are restrictions on personal desires. Since in Khānqāhī life there is complete disconnection from worldly connections, having to divorce the world, Western-enamoured folk find the concept even of Khānqāhiyyat burdensome. If these people had studied, in the history of Islām, the recollection of such greats as al-Ghazālī, al-'Aṭṭār and al-Rūmī they would not have regarded the Khānqāhī life with contempt. Shaykh Farīduddīn 'Aṭṭār says:

   "Even though the life of a dervish is tough, O son,
   Still, no life is better than that of a dervish."

   Wherever the system of English education has been introduced, from that very time devotion to God begins to depart from there; egotism, lust and materialism take root. Eventually, it reaches a point where a person feels aversion to prayer and the Qur'ān, and instead of the masjid, finds the cinema attractive and beloved. Instead of the Khānqāh, places of entertainment seem delightful and

charming. Noble character disappears, just as dīn has already vanished from colleges and universities.

Thus, when modern sciences are combined with the traditional sciences, to the same extent and in the same measure as they are integrated, dīn departs from that place.

7. Over the past half-century, all experiments with the theory of integration have proven unsuccessful. Based on this theory, institutions like Nadwat al-'Ulamā' in Lucknow, Madrasa Ilāhiyāt in Kanpur and Jāmi'ah Milliyyah in Delhi were established. But in this fifty-year span, not a single true 'ālim of dīn has been produced from these institutions from whom the Muslims received any benefit of dīn. The best example given for this theory of integration is Jāmi'ah al-Azhar. Jāmi'ah al-Azhar is an ancient religious institution, founded hundreds of years ago solely for dīnī sciences, from which hundreds and thousands of 'ulamā' of dīn were produced, during which there was not even a trace of English or modern Western sciences.

   Until around thirty to thirty-five years ago, only pure dīnī education was imparted at al-Azhar. However, for some time, modern sciences have also been included, the effect of which has been that Jāmi'ah al-Azhar is no longer that same religious Jāmi'ah al-Azhar which it was three decades ago. Its colour has now turned into something else. From this ancient dīnī institution, the colour of dīn has departed. The lifestyle, dress and culture of its graduates have become Westernised.

   All of this is the consequence of the theory of integration. Wherever and whenever this integration takes root, dīn departs from there. And if any trace of dīn nominally remains, it is under the dominance of Westernism and Christianity. Under this framework, dīn survives in a poor and feeble state. For example, a few years ago, a colloquium was held in which graduates from Egypt and Syria participated, all of whom were thoroughly Westernised. If anything of dīn and its spirit remains due to this integration theory, it is like what can now be observed in al-Azhar.

8. Just as co-educational colleges for boys and girls are a cause of fitnah, so too the mixed institute of dīnī sciences and worldly sciences is a cause of much fitnah.

9. The curriculum of Arabic dīnī sciences is completely separate from that of modern and English sciences. Each has its own distinct nature. To merge these two entirely different types of curricula into one educational program is akin to opening an educational institute combining two opposites.

10. Establishing a mixed educational institution of religious and worldly sciences with the income of waqf is against the conditions of the creator of the waqf. The income from waqf can only be spent on purely religious activities. Spending it in whole or part on worldly education is not permissible. The intent of the creator of the waqf from the waqf is only ākhirah, and this objective can only be fulfilled if the entire income is spent exclusively on dīnī purposes, without mixing in worldly objectives.

فَتِلْكَ عَشَرَةٌ كَامِلَةٌ

“These are ten in total.”

Mission Colleges

The presence of mission colleges in Islāmic countries functions like a deadly poison for Islām. Wealthy and affluent Muslims enrol their young children in mission colleges and schools at an age when the Muslim child is unaware of anything. The slates of their hearts are completely blank. Once admitted into a Christian institution, on this simple slate, Christian religious, ethical, social and civilisational values begin being imprinted on it.

In a life of seven or eight years, everything they see and hear is contrary to Islām. Insensibly, the pattern and marking of Christianity and Westernism become so deeply engraved on their hearts that now in this heart's slate no room remains for the imprint of Islām. When they return home with a college degree, only their name remains Islāmic, while both outwardly and inwardly they are void of Islāmic beliefs and practices. Their hearts are filled with doubts and scepticism about Islām, and from head to toe they are coloured with the hue of Westernism. Cinema and clubs become dear to them – institutions which, according to people of insight, are arenas of aimlessness and spectacles of vulgarity. To Allāh we belong and to Him we are returning.

They refer to themselves as Muslims based on external ethnicity or tribal affiliation, but in disposition and nature, they are entirely Westernised. In particular, they look upon the knowledge of dīn and the 'ulamā' of dīn with disdain and condescension. This condition reaches such an extent that if their own parents, who spent their wealth for their education, are adorned with Islāmic colouring, these very sons regard them with scorn. They feel that staying with their own parents diminishes their social standing, and so they pursue independent homes.

What is this knowledge that has led to even one's own parents being looked upon with contempt? They consider marrying within their own family and relatives a source of disgrace, and see marrying a *mem* (European lady) as a matter of pride. The result is that their cousins and close female relatives are deprived of their wealth and treasures, while all of their earnings are spent with blind love and servitude on this *mem*.

Is it not a matter of sorrow that a person becomes estranged from the flesh and blood of his father and grandparents, and instead becomes not just attached, but obsessed with complete strangers from across the oceans?

The enormous sums that Western governments are spending on mission colleges established in Islāmic countries are not without purpose. Their goal is to raise Muslim children, alongside comfort and luxury, in the embrace of our way of life for a period. Even if they do not make them Christian during this time, at the very least, they will not remain Muslims; they will become just like us in form and conduct. There can be no greater calamity for a Muslim than to have a heart devoid of Islām, and this is precisely the hope and desire of the disbelievers. As Allāh, Exalted is He, states:

وَدُّواْ لَوۡ تَكۡفُرُونَ كَمَا كَفَرُواْ فَتَكُونُونَ سَوَآءٗۖ فَلَا تَتَّخِذُواْ مِنۡهُمۡ أَوۡلِيَآءَ

“They wish you would disbelieve as they have disbelieved, so you would be equal. So do not take from amongst them allies.” (Qur’ān, 4:89)

O Allāh, protect the Muslims from this fitnah, āmīn.

Our Lord! Make us not a trial for the wrongdoing people. And save us by Your mercy from the disbelieving people.

O my dear brothers! The few words I have written at this time, the reality of the situation is far graver, which is already evident to you. I felt ashamed to write more. I now put down my pen.

I wish to say something, but from a grieved heart, I fear
O heart, distressed you will be, else the words are many.

Education Curriculum

There are three types of dīnī educational curricula. The first is that curriculum through which complete scholarly capability is attained, like the Dars-i-Niẓāmī system which is widespread in Dār al-'Ulūm Deoband and all Arabic dīnī madāris in India and Pakistan.

The second is the curriculum through which the capability to understand essential dīnī sciences is acquired. For this, the curriculum suggested by Ḥaḍrat Ḥakīm al-Ummat Mawlānā Ashraf 'Alī Ṣāḥib Thānawī (may his soul be sanctified), called *Ḍamān al-Takmīl fī Ḍamān al-Ta'jīl*, is suitable. This includes, to the necessary extent, introductory texts in Ṣarf, Naḥw, Balāghah and Manṭiq, as well as books like *Mishkāt*, *Jalālayn* and *Hidāyah*. By studying these, a person gains intermediate-level proficiency. Someone who does not have extensive opportunity can study these books over three years and attain the ability to understand the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth with the help of translations and commentaries.

The third curriculum is for the general Muslim public and for students in colleges and schools, through which they can learn the basic Islāmic beliefs and essential practices. For this purpose, *Ta'līm al-Islām* by Muftī Kifāyatullāh Ṣāḥib (all four parts), *Ta'līm al-Dīn* by Ḥaḍrat Ḥakīm al-Ummat Mawlānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānawī and *Bihishtī Zewar* are sufficient. *Qiyāmat Nāmah*, an Urdu writing of Ḥaḍrat Shāh Rafī'uddīn, *Tawārīkh Ḥabībullāh* and a reliable book by an 'ālim from Ahl al-Sunnah on the biographies of the Khulafā' Rāshidūn should also be read. But the condition is that these books are studied lesson by lesson from an ustādh. Self-study alone is not sufficient. Even an educated person must, word-for-word, learn the books from a trustworthy 'ālim to ensure that the content has been correctly understood.

Becoming an 'ālim or mawlānā is not obligatory for everyone, but knowing the necessary beliefs and practices of Islām is obligatory and incumbent upon every Muslim, so that they can obey Allāh and His Messenger. This much knowledge can be gained from books that are in Urdu. So, no Muslim should ever fall short in reading these books. A person who is ignorant of the beliefs and necessary practices of dīn – what kind of Muslim is he?

No matter how intelligent a person is, he cannot understand Urdu arithmetic or Urdu Euclid merely through self-study, until it is formally studied with a teacher. When it comes to Urdu, the difficulty of language may not remain, but the difficulty of the subject still persists, and that can only be resolved through a teacher. No matter how learned someone is in Urdu or literature, he cannot learn Unani medicine or Western medicine just by reading Urdu translations. If someone attempts to treat people based on self-studied translations without formal education, he would be prosecuted by the government. Understand the knowledge of dīn and spiritual medicine similarly: studying it without an ustādh is not knowledge but ignorance and a means to deviance. Allāh protect.

At this time, I will suffice only with this much. If the tawfīq of Allāh, Exalted is He, grants assistance, I can, at some point, submit something about the education curriculum's

types and subtypes. Our final call is that all praise belongs to Allāh, Lord of all the worlds. Blessings be upon the best of His creation, our master Muḥammad ﷺ, his family and companions, and upon us with them. O Most Merciful of the merciful!

Verification of English (Western) Education (Mawlānā Ashraf ʻAlī Thānawī)

In Allāh's name, the Most Merciful, the Ever Gracious.

All praise belongs to Allāh, Lord of all the worlds, the end gain will be for the muttaqīn. Blessings and peace be upon His Messenger, our master Muḥammad, his family and all his companions.

To proceed:

In our time, much discussion takes place regarding the permissibility or impermissibility of English education. Since the arguments from both sides are often insufficient, instead of a decisive conclusion emerging, disagreements continue to grow each day, without any verified statement being realised. It seemed appropriate to present a decisive opinion according to my own understanding. I hope it will be sufficient and satisfactory for the fair-minded, although for the biased fanatic, no speech or writing can ever be convincing, nor should it be expected to be.

Before delving into the objective, a few preliminary points as general principles are being offered up as a preface so that it eases understanding the objective. Upon Him we rely, and from Him we seek assistance.

First Preliminary Point

The evilness of something can be in two ways: intrinsically evil and extrinsically evil. Intrinsically evil means that the thing's essence contains evil and badness, and the evil has not come about due to an external or circumstantial factor. The evil being in its essence has the effect that that thing is never permissible. Like fornication and theft: there is evil in their essence; the evil did not come about due to an external factor. Hence, they can never be a locus of permissibility.

Extrinsically evil means that the thing is, per se and in itself, not evil, but some external factors attach to it due to which it no longer remains suitable for permissibility – like buying and selling after the Adhān of Jumu'ah. Here, there is no evil in the sale itself, but some external factors are attached to it because of which the sale becomes forbidden. The external factor is that upon hearing the Adhān, attending the Jumu'ah ṣalāh becomes necessary based on the statement of Allāh, Exalted is He:

فاسعوا إلى ذكر الله

"Proceed towards Allāh's remembrance." (Qur'ān, 62:9)

If trade is conducted after the Adhān of Jumu'ah, it will cause delay in attending Jumu'ah, hence here evil has attached to the sale and it has been deemed forbidden due to this external factor, otherwise trade itself is not inherently wrong.

Second Preliminary Point

Any matter that becomes a means of corruption and harm, even if it is permissible in itself, becomes impermissible due to being a means to evil. The fuqahā' state that selling weapons to rebels is ḥarām. Even though the trade itself is permissible, because it leads to harm and inevitable corruption, it becomes ḥarām as a consequence.

Third Preliminary Point

Dīn does not refer merely to a few external acts like ṣalāh, ṣawm, ḥajj and zakāt; rather, its greatest component is ‘aqā’id, which is the foundation of salvation – for without correct beliefs, salvation is not possible. Another essential component is praiseworthy character, which, according to the statements of the verifying scholars, is also obligatory like ṣalāh and ṣawm. These include traits like patience, thankfulness, sincerity, humility and generosity. Therefore, if a person performs only the outward acts, but his beliefs are incorrect and his character is flawed, he can never be termed a complete Muslim.

Fourth Preliminary Point

The dunyā, whose condemnation is found in the Qur’ān and authentic ḥadīths, in essence consists of just two things: love of wealth (*ḥubb al-māl*) and love of status (*ḥubb al-jāh*). That is, when wealth and status become so beloved that one no longer is struck at the loss of dīn in relation to them. In other words, if an act or statement brings benefit to dīn but causes harm to wealth and status, or if wealth and status progress while dīn declines, such a person gives preference to wealth and status and shows no concern for dīn. For those who view the Qur’ān and Ḥadīth through the lens of īmān, this point is amongst the most evident of self-evident truths.

Fifth Preliminary Point

The rulings of Sharī‘ah are based on the true nature and reality of things, not merely on their names. Therefore, if the name of something is changed but its essence remains the same, the ruling also remains unchanged. For example, if someone refers to wine as “syrup” or calls fornication “marriage”, the rulings of prohibition on both still apply and do not change.

Sixth Preliminary Point

Attaching a ruling to something is based on the predominant and majority case. A few minor exceptions will not alter this ruling. For example, a particular quantity is fatal for most people in most cases, but in a rare instance, it does not cause death to a specific person or at a specific time. Still, doctors will classify this quantity as fatal and treat the rare exception as nonexistent and not worthy of consideration. Hence, in such contexts, the phrases “للأكثر حكم الكل” (the ruling for the majority applies to all) and “النادر كالمعدوم” (the anomalous is like the nonexistent) have become common sayings. If you reflect a little on your own common expressions, you will find many examples of this. For instance, when a nation is described as brave and courageous, it does not mean that every individual in that nation is brave and no one is cowardly, but rather, it is understood to be in reference to the majority of the nation.

Seventh Preliminary Point

To give a ruling that a specific effect follows from something, it is not necessary for its causes to also be known. Rather, to give a general ruling, observation and experience are fully sufficient evidences. For example, when giving the judgement that a magnet attracts

metal, the truth of this judgement is completely certain and definitive based on repeated observation and experience. Even if the exact cause and reason for the attraction are not known, so much confidence is placed on the experience and observation that if someone presents evidence against it, we will not accept it as evidence against our observation. It will be said that, even if we don't know the evidence, it is surely mistaken because it contradicts the observation. For example, if someone were to provide evidence that magnets do not attract, that evidence would be completely disregarded in light of our observation. The respondent is not obliged to offer responses to these evidences, but it is sufficient for him to say that since it conflicts with observation, it must be wrong.

Eighth Preliminary Point

All things worth pursuing fall into two types: those sought after for their own sake – which can also be called absolute goals – and those sought after for an external reason, which may be termed necessities. That which is intrinsically sought means it is desired in and of itself, not as a means to another end. In contrast, that which is extrinsically sought is not desired for its own sake, but is adopted out of need or compulsion, because it serves as a means to the true goal; without it, reaching the goal is difficult.

Therefore, in pursuing what is intrinsically sought, there is no end, whereas in the case of what is extrinsically sought, pursuit ends once the necessary amount is obtained. For example, consider nourishment and medicine: nourishment is an intrinsic goal, while medicine is a necessity. Hence, nourishment is a lifelong pursuit, but medicine is only needed for the duration of illness – once health is restored, there is no longer a reason to seek it.

Ninth Preliminary Point

In a matter in which people of discretion differ, the disagreement in reality will be over a premise of the argument. It cannot be that both parties agree on the evidence and then disagree on the conclusion or thesis. Thus, regarding the premise over which there is disagreement, if it is an individualised premise, then the disagreement is not worthy of consideration; but if it is a universal premise, then it is worthy of consideration.

For example, one individual uses "Zayd" as the name of a human and says: "Zayd is a man, and whoever is a man is able to write, so Zayd is able to write." Another uses "Zayd" as the name of a donkey and says: "Zayd is a donkey, and no donkey can write, hence Zayd too cannot write." So, the disagreement here is over an individualised premise, namely: is "Zayd" the name of a man or a donkey? This difference is not worth considering; rather, with a little thought the disagreement disappears: if Zayd is a man's name, the first statement is correct and the second is clearly false; and if Zayd is a donkey's name, the second is correct and the first is false.

However, if someone disagrees with the universal premise – "every human is able to write" – by saying: "not every man can write," then this is a disagreement worthy of consideration. Understand this well.

Tenth Preliminary Point

When a ruling is given based on an external factor, the ruling is dependent on that factor. Therefore, if due to a change in time or place the factor no longer exists, the ruling too will no longer apply.

Now that these ten preliminary points have been presented as a preface, with Allāh's help, attention turns to the main objective. It should be understood that English, in and of itself, is a language; and in terms of its widespread usage, it also refers to certain academic fields and sciences. Learning any language or academic field is not, in itself, deemed inherently forbidden. However, when it becomes intertwined with evils and harms, it may become extrinsically forbidden (as explained in the first preliminary point). Once harms and evils become consequential upon it, despite its original permissibility, it becomes worthy of being prohibited (according to the second preliminary point).

Now, consider the consequences that have emerged from modern English education: laziness – and in fact, aversion – towards ṣalāh and ṣawm; weakness – and even confusion and denial – regarding the 'aqā'id; arrogance, ostentation, pretentious behaviour, imitation of disbelievers, belittling of others and regarding religious individuals with contempt. All of these contribute to the destruction of dīn as these matters are components of dīn (as explained in the third preliminary point).

Moreover, people's minds are consumed day and night with material gains and schemes to acquire positions, and in their pursuit the laws of Sharī'ah carry not even the weight of an atom in their estimation, and they become daring therein. This is the dunyā that is despised and accursed by Allāh and His Messenger (as mentioned in the fourth preliminary point). Yet today, wishful thinkers label this very cursed dunyā as "determination" and "progress" – but merely changing the name does not change the nature of the thing, nor does it alter its ruling (in accordance with the fifth preliminary point).

Although these effects do not arise in some people, or arise to a lesser extent, still, probably fewer than 10% are protected – and that too with difficulty – so this exception is not deemed worthy of consideration (according to the sixth preliminary point). The cause of these effects, whether it be the company of heretics, neglect of religious education, the influence of certain academic fields like science or the subtle transmission of the authors' ideas through their writings that settle in the hearts of readers – whatever the case may be – once it is established through observation that these effects do in fact occur, there should be no hesitation in issuing a ruling simply because the specific cause has not been identified. Even if someone brings evidence to show that these effects are not necessary consequences, observation will be deemed to falsify such "evidence" (as explained in the seventh preliminary point).

However, if someone seeks to study English due to a necessity of the dunyā (provided that this necessity is also recognised as such by the Sharī'ah; attaining higher qualifications or positions that require complete opposition to Sharī'ah are not included in "necessity"), or for some religious necessity, such as to respond to

the objections of opponents or to invite them to Islām (though this is rare), then to the extent of that necessity, there is permission, but one must avoid going beyond that (according to the eighth preliminary point).

Based on this explanation, for any fair-minded person, the slightest doubt will not remain regarding the evilness of English education. If a fatwā or view is found from a reliable ʻālim opposing this, then in reality the disagreement is over an individualised premise, not a universal one. That is, in this context, there are two premises in the reasoning of our thesis:

1. From English education, such-and-such evil consequences arise – this is an individualised premise.
2. That from which such evil consequences arise is itself evil – this is a universal premise.

The first premise is not a matter of Sharīʻah, but rather a matter of determining a reality, in which differences of judgement can occur based on observation and experience, and through observation and experience the error of a view can be identified. As for the second premise, it is a matter of Sharīʻah, and no one disagrees over this. Thus, such a disagreement does not harm the thesis we have presented (according to the ninth preliminary point).

However, if through some specific method these evil effects are blocked and the harm to the majority from this education is prevented, then in such a case, the ruling of it being evil would be lifted. But in the current situation, the hopes of this are very low. Nevertheless, there is no issue with the truth of the conditional proposition (according to the tenth preliminary point).

This is the final point we wished to present on this topic, and Allāh, Exalted is He, knows best the truth. With Him is the Mother Book. We ask Allāh for an excellent abode, through the blessings of the master of messengers, the guide to the path, and his progeny and companions.

Written by Muḥammad Ashraf ʻAlī Thānawī Imdādī, may he be pardoned